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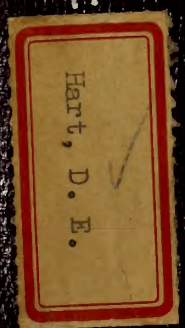

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BOSTON UNIVERSITY

GRADUATE SCHOOL

Thesis

THE SOCIAL AND RELIGIOUS PHILOSOPHY OF HARRIET MARTINEAU

by

Dorothy Edwards Hart

(A.B., Boston University, 1936)

submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

1937

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I. Introduction

A comprehensive understanding of the social and religious philosophy of Harriet Martineau requires a knowledge of the external and circumstantial events which effected her ultimate conclusions.

Hers was not a great mind. Its molding was directly influenced by that with which she came in contact. The fame which she enjoyed during her lifetime was due to her propagation of current themes. She was a journalist, and could write prolifically on that which the public demanded.

In the study of these two phases of her life, it is to be held in mind that her religious philosophy underwent evolution; her social philosophy seems based on weaker ground and is more static.

II. Early Years

Harriet Martineau was born in Norwich,England, in 1802 on June 12, the sixth child of Unitarian parents who belonged to a little coterie of which William Taylor was the head. From birth she suffered from ill-health. Occasional fits of despondency, coupled with an eternal storm of passionate opposition to arbitrary authority which continually raged within her heart, caused her to make for herself a reputation for obstinacy and wilfullness, while internally she suffered dreadfully from her con-

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science. She possessed a conscientiousness---a strong conviction as to what was right, and the ardent desire to do it, which marked her whole career.

She became a religious child. It was, she admits, religion of a bad sort. She says,

"I pampered my vain-glorious propensities by dreams of a divine favor to make up for my utter deficiency of self-respect."[1]

She was abundantly obedient in act, for she never dreamed of being otherwise, but the rebellion within her kept her conscience in a state of perpetual torture.

"I really think if I had onde conceived that anyone cared for me, all my sins and sorrows of my anxious childhood would have been spared me."[2]

She was well-clothed, well-fed, and well-treated, but her emotional life was a starved one.

"My passion for justice was cruelly crossed from the earliest time I can remember, by the imposition of passive obedience and silence on tradespeople, who met with a rather old-fashioned treatment in our house."[3]

She longed to hear in chapel of the duties of the strong toward the weak, of which she felt herself to be one. But no comfort in this was forthcoming.

Religion became the chief source of happiness to her in childhood and early youth. The theology of her parents which was transmitted to her was of a mild type of Christianity, lack-

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But the interpretations of the Scripture by the Unitarians gave her no satisfaction. She was searching for a fitting treatment of the burdensome trouble of conscience and moral irritations which made the misery of her life, but she did not find it. She went her own way, studying the New Testament, and attempting to find solace in her own interpretation.

At the age of fourteen she was sent to a Bristol boarding school, where she came under the influence of Dr. Lant Carpenter, whom she describes later in life as "superficial in knowledge, scanty in ability, narrow in conception, priestly in temper!" [1] The opinions of other contemporaries would seem to render her judgment unfair, as he was held in high esteem by Unitarians. The unfairness may be attributed to her later repudiation of Unitarianism and its advocates and preachers. But whatever her later judgment, her devotion at the time was very great, and caused the already mentally unhealthy child to become fiercely devoted to religion. He was of the Locke and Hartley school, and influenced her toward the study of these men, and toward Priestley. Of her own accord, she delved into the Scotch school of philosophy.

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To add to her miseries, she became gradually deaf. At first her family believed it an added indication of her odd temperament, and even an affectation, When they perceived the truth, they continually berated her for failing to ask that things be repeated.

That she was an eccentric child and devoutly fanatic about religion is seen when at the tender age of eleven, she questioned her brother James on the problem of foreknowledge and free will. James, having no available answer, advised her to look it up herself. She attempted it but realized that she was losing hersalf in sympathy with each author into whom she inquired, so she resolved to read nothing more until she had thought it over very carefully.

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It appeared to Harriet at twenty, and at 53, that the New Testament proceeds on the ground of Necessarianism rather than on the doctrine of free will. She felt that the fatalistic element pervades the doctrine and the morality of Christ.

A firm belief in Necessarianism excludes the practise of prayer. Not only is it absurd to petition for things already ordained, but it is even impious. Mere mortals, in the face of predestination and fore-ordination, have no way of knowing what is good for themselves and therefore have no right to petition.

For some years Harriet prayed only for good states of mind for herself and others. The feeling grew upon her that true piety required resignation about spiritual matters as well as material. She then left off express prayer with no sense of guilt or remorse. The discovery that the practise of prayer was wholly unauthorized by the New Testament, strengthened her conviction. As to Christ's example and need of prayer, she believed that he did not mean exactly as we do by it, and that he would condemn our prayers as he did that of the Pharisees. To Christ prayer was chiefly contemplation and aspiration.

Harriet felt that none but Necessarians at all understand the Necessarian doctrine. To her, its truth was so irresistible that when once understood, it was adopted as a matter of course. She held the basic truths of Necessarianism all her life and firmly believed that all the best minds that she knew were among

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IV. First Attempts at Literature.

Her first writing was impelled by the advice of her brother James, who, realizing how lonely she would be when he left for school, advised her to write for the Monthly Repository, the literary organ for Unitarianism. Her first paper was entitled "Female Writers on Practical Divinity", the purpose of which was to demonstrate that women could teach morality better than men. Whatever its defects or merits, it pleased the Unitarians, and she was for a length of time to be one of their literary spokesmen.

She had some writings which she could later term dull and doleful prose, published by Houlston, a stern Calvinistic publisher. When he asked for more, she decided from her newspaper readings that the subject of machine breaking was a good one. During the commercial agitation which followed the war with France, the operatives who had to do with spinning and weaving, suffered. The demand which war always creates, ceased. The pow-loom came in and the hand-worker began to go out. Hand weavers begged for alleviation of their poverty. They asked to be sent to Canada. They begged that the power-loom be restrained by law, and when that was refused they rose in despair and lawlessly overthrew the machines. The various manufacturing towns were having difficulty with strikes and riots. Harriet wrote, in addition to the essay on machine breaking, a similar one on riots.

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Their success occasioned a request from the hosiers and lace-makers of Derby and Nottingham,which she obliged in "The Turn Out".

She did not pretend to have any knowledge of Political Economy,or of Smith or Malthus,at the time,yet her point of view is not unlike that of the later Political Economy Series.

In these first tales,she is not a sentimental sympathiser with the poor class. She felt that the evils resulting from the introduction of machinery to replace men are not the result of the economic system itself as much as they are the proof of a lack of understanding on the part of the people to comprehend the system of laws which governs all governs the economic phase of life. Her point of view is strongly Necessarian.

In the guise of a visitor to a town where a riot has taken place,she undertook in the tale,"The Rioters" to indicate to those participating in the fray,that they could not amend wrongs in that way. The machine,which symbolized to them the thief of of their daily earnings,had come as a blessing to England. It was true that some evil resulted,but the factors of overproduction and subsequent depression would have to be borne until the arrival of certain prosperity. When the representative striker asked how he was to live in the meantime,she ignored the question and went on to say that national pride must supersede personal gain or even inconvenience. England alone possessed machinery and all countries would soon be dependent on her. Work would necessarily become steadily and permanently plentiful.

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There is no solution of the problem of how England is to restrain the other countries from the use and development of machinery.

The superficial, one-sided reasoning of this paper was to be typical of all her papers on political economy. She maintained that at the time of these papers, she was not aware of the fact that she was delving into political economy. It is hard to know at what she did believe she was aiming, for certainly there is no literaty quality to these tales, any more than there is in the Political Economy series.

It was not until 1827 that she "happened" to discover Mrs. Marcet's "Conversations on Political Economy" and learned that this was what she had been teaching in her stories. It occurred to her that the whole system of political economy might well be presented to the masses if the principles were revealed in the natural workings of select passages of the social life. Her faith and her belief comprehended that the people of England felt a dire need for the explanation of the science of political economy, which was then comparatively young.

V. Background for Political Economy Tales.

It is necessary to know the state in which England was at this time to understand the later phases of Harriet Martineau's life which was so active in public affairs. Critics have sneered at her belief that there was great eagerness for such a work as she was to put forth, but this was a period ripe for reform. The war was over, with no prospect of its return. The artisans

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The country was suffering from the scarcity and the dearth which was the result of the passing of the Corn Law in 1815,in which it was decreed that no foreign grain was to be imported until the wheat in the home markets had been at eighty shillings per quarter for six months or more. In addition to the ban on wheat,the law forbade the admission of cattle. Taxes were being heaped on the people. It is even said that the poor people on the coast used salt water for cooking. There was even a tax on medicine.

Both houses of Parliament were greatly in need of reform. The corruption which had been organized under Walpole had by no means abated.

Administration of public funds had been wielded in such a way as to increase pauperism. The system of organized and corrupt administration of workhouses made the social position of

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A general knowledge of these conditions is necessary as a background for Miss Martineau's work from now onward,because as a journalist,she dipped her pen into all the current topics of the day.

Partly because of her health,and partly to find a publisher for her intended series of tales illustrating the principles of political economy, she went to Newcastle and then to London where she might have had work which would have supported her while she was making her first real attempt at authorship,had not her mother requested her to return home. Dutiful daughter that she was she obeyed with alacrity despit her own inclination. On her return home she entered upon what was to be her last,but

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Upon her return home she learned of three prizes to be awarded the respective authors of essays to convert to Unitarianism, the Catholics, the Jews, and the Mohammedans. The amount of the prizes increased in the order, in proportion to the difficulty of conversion. The essay for the conversion of the Catholics was due six months before the others. Harriet wrote for it and received the prize. Encouraged by her success, she entered the contest for the others and won these also.

Her titles were subtly written in these three conventional Unitarian papers. For the conversion of the Catholics she entitled her paper "The Essential Faith of the Universal Church". The Mohammedans were invited to enter "The Faith as Unfolded by Many Prophets", and the Jews were inducted into "The Faith as Manifested Through Israel".

These views which she penned with so much complacency, she later regarded as ignorant and metaphysical, and imbued with weakness and falseness.

VI. Development in Religious Philosophy.

Her conception of religion was being broadened. She now deemed herself a Theist. She still thought it good to worship the Eternal Presence. To her Jesus was the Messenger of that Holy Presence, symbolical of all good, purest of all beings under God, the highest type He had ever permitted to be revealed to man of the excellencies od the divine nature. But her system

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of theology had no place for atonement,for a personal Evil One, no hell,no verbally inspired revelation.

What Harriet failed to understand at this point was that she had undergone,not so much a change in her theological point of view,as a change in her own attitude. What she deemed Theism, or free Christianity,was nothing more than the Unitarianism of her parents. That which she had believed to be devout Unitarianism seems to have been her own morbidly ego-centric religion which found her so ardent a devotee because of her thwarted nature. The overwhelming amount of belief and superstition was not of the religion itself,but of her own mind in its unhealthy state.

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VII. The Illustrations of Political Economy.

Despite the fact that reform was in the air, and that conditions were crying for discrimination on the part of the upper classes, Miss Martineau had a very difficult time in persuading any publishers that the public was eagerly awaiting such a work as she was attempting in her series of tales illustrating the principles of political economy. All refused with the excuse that they could undertake nothing at the time because of the excitement of the Reform Bill and the cholera.

Finally Charles Fox was persuaded through his brother to undertake this project. He offered to publish it with certain stipulations which would effect his withdrawal should it be that the deal was a failure. Harriet was incensed at his selfish point of view, and nowhere throughout her Autobiography is she particularly gentle or friendly toward him. Throughout her account of the dealings she strains at the leash which bound her to him. What she failed to understand was that he, a matter-of-fact and materialistic publisher, whose livelihood depended on successful business relations, could not see the greedy desire on the part of the public for this work. Her own self-confidence was abundant. She had no doubts as to the complete value ofhher intended project, even if the publisher could see no reason why a hitherto unknown and possibly unsucessful woman writer should burst into a startling success which would shake the foundations of economic England.

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Very naively she tells of her method of writing these tales. She first furnished herself with all of the standard works on the science of political economy. She had already made a skeleton plan of the course which was to comprehend the four divisions --Production,Distribution,Exchange,and Consumption. She took notes on her material,and then made summaries of the principles which were found,at the end of each chapter. Next,the choice of scenes was made. The plan of each tale was to embody each leading principle in a character,and the " mutual operations of these embodied principles" supplied the action of the story. If the scenes were foreign to her,she sent to the library for books of travel or topography. The characters were to convey political economy,either by exemplification or by conversation.

Political economy as a science was then approximately fifty years old. Adam Smith had first promulgated its fundamental truths in his"Wealth of Nations" in 1776. Since then Malthus,Ricardo,Mill,amd one or two others had added to the facts of social arrangement,but it was not even then a complete body of reasoned truths.

Today's economists agree that Adam Smith is fairly pliable in his theory. Any and every economist of any school can locate a basis for his theory in Smith. However,one of Smith's most startling and most central statements had been that self-interest is a necessary condition of the welfare of mankind. The two important economists of Harriet Martineau's day were Mal-

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thus and Ricardo. Malthus,a disciple of Smith,was teaching the basic principle of self-interest,both as a necessary condition of the common welfare of mankind,and the surest evidence of the Creator. The passion of self-interest is stronger than the passion of benevolence. Therefore,the more ignorant,dominated by the stronger passion,are led to pursue happiness,an end which they would have failed to attain had the principle of the conduct of benevolence guided them.

Ricardo was a wealthy member of Parliament who had bought his seat with money gained in the stock exchange. In all his writings on economic theory,which basically paralleled Smith and Malthus,his exposition is especially noted for its theoretical aspect. He has not one illustration from actual life. He assumes average laborers doing average work under average conditions of perfect competition,and receiving a natural wage. He was essentially utilitarian and materialistic. Perhaps no other economist has been so abstract and hypothetical.

And so Miss Martineau wrote her political economy series advocating the principles of these laissez-faire economists. She exemplified Malthus' doctrine,fine and simple,as it came from his "virtuous and benevolent" mind. In keeping with the doctrine of laissez-faire,she advocated free trade in corn,the result of which she was certain would effect agricultural improvement. She also urged a carefully conducted emigration to provide for the surplus population. Above all,she urged education without limit. On basic principles,she was right about

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Yet,Harriet Martineau was not actively in sympathy with the people upon whom the economic laws were acting. By religion she was a Necessarian. And so she was economically. Just as Providence was not interruptive but stoically impartial and un-interfering,so the laws of political economy were beautifully immutable. The masses were ignoring these inevitable laws. They vainly imagined that they could relieve their situation by combining against their employers instead of becoming resigned to the necessary operation of the chain of causes and effects which had been discovered and expounded by Smith,Malthus and above all,Ricardo.

She explained that wages depend,not on any factor within human control,but on great natural laws as predictable and as immutable as the law of gravity. Essentially she represented the extreme in laissez-faire capitalism,in her advocation of free competition,free exchange of labor,and free foreign trade.

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VIII. Criticism of the Illustrations.

According to Miss Martineau's account, and that of Mrs. Miller, statesmen, politicians, and students, praised the clearness, and appreciated the power of the work as political economy. The general public eagerly bought and read the books, both for bearing on legislative questions of the day, and for their vividness and interest as stories.

Percy Colson, however, says of them

"It is difficult to account for the success of the stories, for truth to tell, the stories are quite unreadable nowadays. They consist of a mixture of elementary, borrowed, half-baked and indigested science sewed up in the form of dull fiction wholly without a redeeming feature. But she had chosen the right moment. Reform was in the air. The Reform Bill was the dominant political question. Young Dickens was beginning to attack social abuses, the demand for education was making itself heard. Almost any instructive writer would have been read, and as most of the readers of the series knew even less political economy than did the author, there was no one except Mr. Mill to challenge her proud eminence as a Political Economist." [1]

Mill, who believed that laissez-faire still had possibilities, was obliged to agree with critics that the tales carried the doctrine to ridiculous lengths, and said that Harriet "reduces the laissez-faire system to absurdity as far as the principle goes, by merely carrying it out to all its consequences." [2] He resented the way in which the name of "a mere tyro like Harriet Martineau" was coupled with the names of real contributors to political science like himself.

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If the tales are poor political economy,they are poorer fiction. Just as to Harriet Martineau Providence and Political Economy were constant and unchanging,so life is in these tales. The logic is fallacious,and she ignores the other side of the problem altogether. Her characters talk fluently of nothing but political economy. These stories were written with fixed principles in mind,and each situation and character is molded to fit any idea the author chooses to present,no matter how great the improbability or the artificiality.

The method of presentation is reminiscent of the Socratic. Some one of the characters acts as the eager listener and asks leading questions which give another character opportunity to propound the principles in which Miss Martineau believes. Most of the tales are nothing more than dialogue. What little there is of action is strictly related to the causes and results of the laws of political economy.

In"Life in the Wilds",Miss Martineau shows how a community which has hitherto lived in normal circumstances,when deprived of all kinds of,not only luxury,but of necessity,will in in endeavoring to regain its normalcy,experience in miniature the steps of progress that our entire civilization has undergone. This tale is somewhat like a lecture in economic theory with illustrations. The entire brunt of the conversation is borne by the minister of the community,who explains to his wife or to the other members of the group,the progressive elements of the society which they are endeavoring to rebuild.

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She brings the community out of the deplorable state of deprivation into their former circumstances in a very smooth and uninterrupted way entirely coincident with the views of the capitalist. Throughout she supposes ideal conditions which will favor the development of the society according to her principle. The basic weakness of this and other tales is the inability of the author to conceive a plot. Nor is she at all proficient in the matter of presenting which can in itself enable the reader to infer the possibilities and results of the machinations of society.

Throughout the tales her view is entirely with the capitalistic class. The only members of the lower class with whom she has any sympathy are those who see the wisdom of the man with money and property, and are willing to abide by his advice because they see the inevitability of doing otherwise. In "The Hill and the Valley", Paul, whom the working men consider eccentric because he seems to be as considerate of the welfare of the factory owners as of his own, is very highly commended because he sees with intelligence and far-sightedness that the working class unfortunately does not know the solution of the problem. In "The Manchester Strike" Mr. Allen is the commendable character because he sees the futility of striking unfairly against the mill owners.

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In other tales she begins incidents which she never brings to a finish,or which she considers sufficiently treated by mere mention. In "Brooke and Brooke Farm",we are introduced to a very improvident family in dire circumstances. The little boy is sent for milk for which he has no money. The woman who sells the milk refuses to give it to him. The mother of Lucy, the intelligent child who seems a prodigy in her knowledge of the principles of political economy,offers to pay for the day's supply of milk. The transaction is carried out,while the woman excuses her refusal on the grounds that she cannot give further credit to neighbors who could pay if they managed better and if they gave up tea,which they were drinking because it was cheaper than milk. And Lucy's mother answers,

"Certainly not,Mrs.Johnson. What very fine cows yours are!" This seems to be Miss Martineau's attitude toward the questions which would naturally arise from the side which she fails to represent. She merely dismisses them. In this same tale one of the poor men for whom she has no sympathy because he seems unable to either rise above circumstances by adopting the methods approved by the land owners,or to accept his fate as a part of the inevitability of the laws of political economy on men,

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In "The Manchester Strike" she has a splendid opportunity for something more than dry-as-dust fact in the person of little Martha Allen, the emaciated little child who works in the factory. But if there is any ingenuity of character to be found, it must be on the part of the reader. There is no sympathy extended by the author to those children who are forced to work in factories even on night shifts. However, she is much concerned with showing the abuses heaped upon the mill owners by their workmen.

Miss Martineau's characters are mere puppets which she moves as it suits the principles of political economy. She was not a reformer. She had no sympathy for the lower class. Any sympathy which shows a possibility of cropping up is overborne by the attitude that it is no more than is deserved. It is the result of willful neglect of the knowledge that what now is must always be. But whatever harsh criticism she receives now, and received then, and she was the object of scathing and scalding satire on the part of the Quarterly and Fraser's, she also much praise and commendation. Her Autobiography tells of the approval expressed by Louis Phillippe of France, who ordered a copy of each of the series for each of his family, and who de-

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IX. Life in London as an Author.

In November 1832 Harriet took rooms in Conduit Street in London. A few months later she moved to Fluyder Street where she lived until her illness in 1839. The liberation which this move gave her was beneficial to her mental health. Of this year she says,

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any interval of spring. My life began with winter,burst suddenly into summer,and is now ending with autumn,—mild and sunny. I have had no spring,but that cannot be helped now. It was a moral disadvantage,as well as a great loss of happiness,but we all have our moral disadvantages to make the best of....I had now,by thirty years of age ascertained my career,found my occupation,and achieved independence; and thus the rest of my life was provided with its duties and its interests."[1]

Thus she began her career as a journalist in which field she shared glory with but one other woman journalist.

Her fame spread. Variuos people urged her to write on their hobbies. Among them were the Socialists. Presently she had at her ear Mr.Robert Owen whose beliefs in co-operation and socialism were definitely opposed to her doctrine of strong individual freedom. He interested her by the "candour,and cheerfulness, the benevolence and charming manners which would make him the most popular man in England if he could but distinguish between assertion and argument."[2] She was later to admit that he might have been more correct concerning the social problems than she.

The Socialists at one time sent her material,and asked her to make of it what use she could. So Harriet used it in "For Each and All" and charming Robert Owen did not seem to mind that his material went into an anti-Socialist tale.

There seems to be adequate proof that she was held to be of some importance in the fact that Lord Brougham himself asked her to write a series of tales which would be propaganda for the New Poor Law. Lord Althorp's secretary,Lord Drummond,asked

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1.Martineau,Harriet. Autobiography p.138, vol.I

2.Martineau,Harriet, Autobiography, p.174. vol.I

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to treat of the tithes and sent her material in order that she might introduce open material to the public before it went through as a bill. At the same time the chairman of the Excise commision came to ask her to write on Excise,before it should be introduced to Parliament.

Lord Drummond asked her,as a representative dissenter, her opinion of Lord Althorp's proposal to remove the tax on saddle horses in the case of clergy and dissenting ministers. She said that the dissenting ministers would like it very much---if the dissenting ministers had any saddle horses. When he asked what she would substitute,she replied that she would begin upon the excise,set free the smallest articles first,which least repay the expense of collection,and go on to the greatest.

She worked on two stories of Excise. In these stories, "The Jerseymen Meeting" and "The Jerseymen Parting",She depicts conditions of ignorance,but happiness,on the isle of Jersey, where there are no customs,no excises,and no taxes. One of the families inherits a bottle business and removes to England where there are excises and taxes in abundance. After several and unbelievable hardships,they finally return to the happy isle to be happy once again.

She sent copies to Lord Althorp a day or so before his budget was brought. On opening the Times on the day on which the budget was published,she was amused to discover that he had made a curious alteration concerning saddle horses,applying remission to clergymen and ministers only whose income was

to treat of the titles and sent her material in order that she might introduce open material to the public before it went through as a bill. At the same time the chairman of the Excise commission came to ask her to write on Excise, before it should be introduced to Parliament.

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under two hundred pounds a year,having as she says,no idea of the cost of keeping a horse. It also amused her to note that he had taken the duty from green glass bottles,and from sweets, both of which had been treated in her stories.

X. Poor Law and Pauper Tales.

In 1833,she published a series of tales as propaganda for the New Poor Law,exposing the abuses engendered under the curent Poor Law administration. Here somewhat less harsh criticism may be made of this series of tales. The same faults exist in these stories,but they seem to glare less conspicuously,possibly because the cause which she advocated was a more worthy one.

A commission had presented to the public a Report concerning the abuses discovered in the administration of the Poor Law, and Harriet used this Report as a source for her knowledge.

She was in favor of abolishing the Poor Laws entirely as a measure to rid the country of the abuses which they effected. This opinion can be seen in the way in which she packs into one story as many of the abuses as possible. That all the circumstances could have happened to all the characters that they did is utterly impossible. Moreover,she assumes that all of the abuses were common to all of the unfortunate.

In "The Parish",she has portrayed an example of every abuse which could have occurred under the inadequacies of the Poor Law. She maintains an earnest respect for the "honest

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poor" of whom she represents but one. His virtues are far outshadowed by the villainies attributed to the dishonest poor.

In "The Hamlets",parallel conditions are shown. In this tale she accomplishes what her theory represented as a panacea for these abuses,the abolition of the parish workhouse in the very swift and unimpeded progress made by Mr.Barry. In one year he had reformed the town to such an extent that every man had work enough to keep him out of the poorhouse. Miss Martineau portrays Utopian reform. In her Preface to these tales she is just as optimistic concerning the amelioration of evils of the prevailing system when she says that improvement must of necessity follow exposure.

However,she did illustrate,though to a great extreme,the evils and abuses which Lord Grey's commission had discovered. Paupers were receiving an annual allowance from the parish with no return of labor. There were those who felt they had a place in the workhouse by inheritance. Not only did the honest poor get taxed for the support of their improvident neighbors,but indirectly for the fees and expenses of the magistrates and the clerks,which would not have been necessary had not parish relief been improperly claimed,and for the collectors of the rate whose fee rose with the amount of trouble they experienced.

She published only four tales for this cause.

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The book which was a result of this American journey was called "Society in America". The publishers refused to call it "The Theory and Practise of Society in America". Her object was to judge American society in its spirit and methods,by its own tests,the Declaration of Independence,and the constitutions based upon its principles. She felt that too many authors had compared America and England when the bases upon which they founded their decisions were not at all similar.

Later in life,Harriet criticized the work for its metaphysical framework and the abstract treatment of what must necessarily be,she felt,a concrete subject.

She treated of several topics;slavery,which she felt was indefensible socially,morally,and economically;of the exclusion of women from political affairs. She felt that the advocacy of woman's cause becomes mere detriment precisely in proportion to her personal reasons for unhappiness,unless personal trouble is left entirely out of the account in stating the condition of that sex. Women must be morally as well as intellectually capable,and must speak from a conviction of the truthand not from personal unhappiness. The best advocates are yet to come in the person of the professional women,the female physicians,artists, administrators,educators,and substantially successful authors. Women's powers should be cultivated in education. And women will see the day when they will make as well as obey the laws of their country.

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She also attacked the laws of primo-geniture and the transfer of land which makes accumulation possible.

Miss Martineau returned to England in 1836. In the next year the young queen was crowned. Harriet attended the coronation services with a book and a bag of sandwiches, and was annoyed at the whole service. She felt that the pomp and circumstance only brought to light the ineffectualness of the monarchy, a fact which was too strong to be overpowered by pageantry, music, and the blasphemous religious of the day. To her, the adulation seemed distributed equally and indiscriminately to God and to the queen.

A broadening of her religious thought, revealing a tendency toward the views of her later life is seen in the criticism of public religious service.

"No public or religious service fails to offend thoughtful or reverend persons, from its ascription of human faculties, affections and qualities to the assumed first cause of the universe; but the Jewish or heathen ascription to him of military and aristocraric rank, and royal prerogative, side by side with the same ascription to the queen was the most coarse and irreverend celebration that I was ever a witness to."[1]

In 1838, she started on a journey on the Continent, but her already poor health gave way, and unable to continue, she was forced to a sickroom which she did not leave for five years.

I. Martineau, Harriet, Autobiography p.423 vol.I.

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XI. Life in the Sickroom

Harriet Martineau continued to write during the time she was confined to the room which she called her abode for so long. The public received some tales for children and her essay on her life as an invalid. This work she afterward despised because she felt that at the writing she was lingering in the metaphysical stage of mind,not perfectly emancipated from the debris of the theological.

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These were heavy years,from 1839 to 1844 but they were years in which she felt that she made great philosophic progress. A large part of the transition from religious inconsistency and irrationality to the strength and liberty of free thought was made at this time. She was not yet intellectually capable of a wide philosophical survey,nor was she morally bold enough for a deep investigation in regard to certain matters which she had always taken for granted.

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suggest a right issue. The problem of fruitlessly attempting to get rid of the difficulty by presenting a two-fold aspect of God,the Father being the model of justice,and the Son of love and mercy results in regarding God asstyrant,while the sweeter and nobler attributes are engrossed by the man Jesus, whose fate only deepens the infamy of the divine cruelty.

Gradually she began to obtain glimpses of the conclusion which seemed so simple after its comprehension. She perceived that it was possible that human beings could not understand the scheme or the nature of the universe any more than,as Carlyle says,the minnow in the creek can comprehend the disturbances in his world,by the tides. It is impossible for man to comprehend anything beyond his own ken;therefore,how could he possess the faculty to understand revelation? It is impossible to have moral government and moral qualities in a world beyond the comprehension of human faculties,since these qualities pertain to and are related to mankind itself. She gave up the idea of a future life,feeling that it was merely a figment of the imagination,representing the millenium which the apostles looked for. The conception of life after death as a compensation for the ills and misery of life on earth,or as a penal department of the Great Judge,to punish the guilty who escaped on earth,she felt to be a rationalization. The doctrine of resurrection was unbelievable,because of physical impossibility. She could not believe the doctrine of the immortality of the soul without tangible evidence.

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But she still resorted ,though she confesses that it was in "indolence and prejudice",to the plea of instinct,the instinctive and universal love of life,and the abhorrence of complete extinction.

Upon a friend's remarking on the indispensability of religion,which she felt was necessary to a good state of mind, Harriet disagreed,and said that she thought the best state of mind was to be found,however one could account for it,on those who were called philosophical atheists. She knew several of them,some avowed and some not,and numbered them among her most honored friends and acquaintances; and for conscientiousness, integrity,seriousness,and effective intellect,she knew nothing like them. They were humble-minded in the presence of the mysteries of the universe,and most equable in spirit and temper in the affairs of life. In their management of themselves,and their expectations from the lot of mankind,they were most disinterested. Harriet herself was necessarily becoming a philosophical atheist.

XII. The Influence of Mr.Atkinson.

In 1844 her long illness came to an end,an end attributed by Miss Martineau to mesmerism. Mesmerism and phrenology were the two new drawing-room fads of the day. Harriet's brother-in-law urged her to try cure by mesmerism. This she did and was pleased to discover immediate and positive ameliorating effects. She soon was wholly well.

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Mr.Atkinson,a friend of Miss Martineau's brother-in-law, had actually prescribed mesmerism and also had recommended a certain mesmerizer whose services had suited Harriet very much. Her gratitude for her recovery naturally included Mr.Atkinson. A cousin with whom she stayed for a few days arranged a meeting with him.

During her acquaintance with him,she felt that at first her faults and peculiarities deferred the time when she should understand him as he wished to be understood. A great impediment to her comprehension was that having been alone thus far in her pursuit of philosophy,she was ignorant of all other roads. Mr. Atkinson's method was so wholly different that it took her a long time to ascertain his route and ultimate point of view. For half her life she had been astray among metaphysicians and their methods. She supposed it ignorance on his part that his and her ideas did not concur,and was rash enough now and then to proffer information from her metaphysical authors. He politely thanked her and left her to discover that he knew through and through what they had merely sketched the surface of. He held the Baconian,inductive point of view;she the metaphysical. Consequently they had difficulty in being concurrent. She confessed that she would get irritated,and when she was irritated she was always conceited and wrong. Fortunately he had a great deal of patience with her. When she finally comprehended his ultimate point of view,she had every reason to see the impossibility of the metaphysical point of

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In this year,1845,to insure herself a calm and peaceful abode in the country, Miss Martineau purchased two acres of land within a half mile of Ambleside,and had built a house which she named "The Knoll". Wordsworth was one of her neighbors and the two enjoyed many congenial visits.

In this same year,a potato famine was impending. There was great alarm for the farming interest,and Mr.Bright's Committee on Game Laws published the evidence laid before them. They asked Harriet to write in the method of the Poor Law series, something that would show the detriment of the Game Laws. Thus while she was waiting for "The Knoll" to be completed,she wrote "Forest and Game Laws",revealing the effects of the mischievous Game Laws which were in operation upon society at large, and more particularly upon the fortunes of individual farmers, and upon the laborers who were led into poaching.

"The Billow and the Rock "was published in the next year. This was one of a series of tales for "The Playfellow", a series of tales for children. She had conceived the idea while confined to her sickroom. Mrs. Miller says that this is the last of her work in which the theism she had held up to this time as religious truth, makes itself visible. The manuscript of this was given to Mr.Knight in 1847, and therefore a step in the development of her religious thought can be dated.

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XIII. Eastern Life Past and Present.

She was beginning a new experiment which was to revise her opinions concerning the genesis of faiths and their influence on morals. She made a journey into the East for eight months, going through Malta, up the Nile to the second cataract, to Cairo, along the track of Moses, passing Sinai, and to Petra. She completely traversed Palestine and went through Syria and into Beyrout.

Her plan of "Eastern Life Past and Present", which was the objective result of this trip, was to illustrate the geneology of the four old faiths: Egyptian, Hebrew, Christian and Mohammedan.

She believed that it became evident to her, as she says she is sure it could not have been had she not wandered through the scenes and monuments of these faiths, that it was inevitable that man should pass through each of the four religions as forms of religious development. Nations and individuals pass through a period wherein they suppose a whole pantheon of gods first, then a trinity, then a single deity. People are childlike in that they transfer their own consciousness to all external objects, concluding them to be alive like themselves. To them the divine beings are exaggerated men. They regard the universe from a human point of view, and under the influences of human notions and affections.

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As this first stage is passed, the conception of the deity

and of the divine government becomes abstract and indefinite, until the indistinguishable line is reached which is supposed and not seen,to separate the highest order of Christian philosophers from the philosophical atheists. The philosophical atheist is of course the highest stage.

The essential thesis of this work is that close relationships exist among all the effectual faiths which have ever operated upon mankind.

The Egyptian religion had a great reverence for Life and its organization. They reverenced natural instinct and animal life. But the Egyptian priesthood led the people by degrees into gross brute worship,causing the misapplication and ill-conveyance of this reverence for the fact of life. Any fault therefore with the Egyptian philosophy is to be found in its misapplication.

Miss Martineau feels that Christians go to the other extreme in utterly disregarding the inferior animals"who have shared with us for thousands of years the yet unsolved mystery of sentien existence." In their condemnation of Egyptian and heathen worship of the body,Christians may be at fault in the worship of the intellectual and thoughtful aspects. Too sharp a division is made between spiritual and corporal.

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of God than that of His being a national God,and the greatest of gods. He regarded Yahveh as the God of his forefathers,Abraham,Isaac,and Jacob,not as the god of the Egyptians. His view of God was limited,but his recognition of the spiritual rights of man was the fullest and noblest which has ever been attained.

Concerning Christ himself,she believed that a large element of Christ's life and thought was that of the Essenes,who were she thought in the strictest sense,Necessarians. They believed that the hairs of a man's head were numbered and that every movement of his thoughts was determined by an immutable providence; that men were truly and practically brothers under the Fatherhood of God. They refused to call any man master on earth,damned slavery,and discountenance every kind of servitude. Obedience to civil power was commanded,but they took no part in it. The love of God,the love of truth,the love of man were the three things of which man's best temper consisted. Celibacy was advocated for themselves but,like Jesus,they loved little children.

Miss Martineau had no sympathy with those who considered Jesus's life mournful. There was too much dwelling on the lowness of mind of his followers,on the absence of sympathy in His family,on the malice of his enemies on the apparent failure of His mission,and on His early and humiliating death.

He had all gifts of the soul. All things administered satisfaction to Him. All the things He represents give joy. Never

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His family,on the malice of his enemies on the apparent fail-
ure of His mission,and on His early and humiliating death.

He had all gifts of the soul. All things administered sate
isfaction to Him. All the things He represents give joy. Never

before were so few months of life crowded with joy as were the months of his ministry. He found joy in the crowds who came with their griefs, in the docile, the faithful, the helpful. Intense joy came to Him in the refuge under the silence of solitude of the spirit and in the lessons of prayer.

Miss Martineau feels that we fail to understand Christ adequately because the imagery we get from Him and from His teachings is foreign to us. If Jesus were a Saxon and came to us now to reform, and free our souls, His imagery would be our rural cottages and the alleys of our towns.

Christ wished the people to enter a condition of earnestness, sincerity, and affection toward God, and their neighbors, and their enemies, and He did this by homely and domestic referr ences.

"When we shall have learned to receive his doctrine in the simplicity in which he gave it, to receive it from himself, his life and his words, they will probably become aware that it is its commixture with superstitions and institutions older than itself, which is the cause of its not having been more extensive and effectual in its operation than the history of eighteen centuries shows it to have been."[1]

At this point in her philosophical and religious development, it has been asserted by Harriet and by critics, that she is an ardent advocate of the doctrine of Necessarianism. Mrs. Miller says that it was the publication of this work that declared to the world that Harriet Martineau had ceased to have a theology.

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I. Martineau, Harriet Eastern Life Past and Present p.559.

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Harriet endeavored to show the futility of belief in a Divine cause by explanation of the tenets of the chief religions which had influenced mankind.

From the point of view of style,depth,interest and obvious sincerity,with the exception of the Autobiography,this is the best thing that Miss Martineau wrote. It is her most readable work,if we again make the same exception.

In its clear,concise understanding of these faiths her mind seems much less restricted than in her former works. The substance of her former books was essentially journalistic. There is about this,a spontaneity,a quaintness to her description of travelling through these countries. There is evolution of thought. She had no concisely definite outline and dogmatic principle upon which she had planned to mold this new work. Thus,what the reader has as richness is the lively yet thoughtful narration of a journey. And the minor incidents of the inconveniences of travel,or of commonplaces seen along the way,detract not at all from the wealth of the material. It is like becoming acquainted with Miss Martineau outside of office hours. She wrote most of her books from a sense of duty. She wrote this more from the point of view of pleasure. One reads them respectively with the same points of view.

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After her return to the countryside at "The Knoll", she was approached by Charles Knight who was writing a history of the thirty years peace i.e., 1815 to 1845. Difficulties had arisen concerning its publication; early suscribers had deserted and Mr. Knight was left with a very heavy burden on his hands. Whether he knew of Harriet's facility for turning her pen toward any and everything, or whether he had real faith in her is not known. But Harriet told him she did not know whether write history. It would be necessary to wait until she had finished her book advising servants how to conduct themselves, and a guide to the Lake district.

She boasted after the completion of the two volumes on the history, that it was but six months from the time she opened the books for information to the time she deposited the manuscript in the publisher's hands. The second volume required the same amount of time for its completion. She later wrote the history of the years from the opening of the century to the Peace. The whole thing then passed out of the hands of Mr. Knight and herself to be finished elsewhere.

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XIV. Social Teaching and Practise.

While Harriet Martineau was devoting her energies to the field of instructive literature,she was also carrying out another duty that was most pleasurable to her. This was the task of delivering a yearly course of lectures to the working people of Ambleside and their families. She was instigated by the enjoyment and the value in her religious development that she had received from Dr.Carpenter's presentation in her school-days,of the geography of Palestine. It occurred to her that the school children of the district might receive the same value from her. The school-mistress did not object and so the children had the benefit of an extra-curricular course. At the second lecture Harriet perceived the presence of parents and older brothers and sisters,and she conceived the idea of lecturing to the families in general. Her object was to give rational amusement to men whom circumstances conspired to drive to public houses,and to interest them in matters which might lead them to books or something to think about.

Her second lecture was on Sanitary Matters,an effectual preparation for her scheme for instituting a Building Society. Conditions in Ambleside were typical of those in other country towns and villages. Great landowners had room for mansions but not for cottages for their laborers. The laborers could not demand better living conditions because of their great dependence on the landlords. Disobedience,insubordination,or insurrection of any sort was punishable by immediate discharge,which

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would involve the loss of a dwelling as well as of work. The scarcity of work for able-bodied men assured the landlord of a plentiful supply of workers who would not have the courage to throw away the chance for earning a living,no matter how meager that living was. People were compelled to sleep ten, twelve,and even fourteen in as few as two rooms. One of the causes of excessive intemperance of the men was the discomfort of these crowded dwellings. The kind-hearted among the gentry tended the sick,prayed with the disheartened,and reproved the sinner,but Harriet found it difficult to persuade these comforters that removing the causes was better than wine,broth, prayers and admonitions.

She felt that her only recourse lay in the approach to the workies themselves,and therefore,in her set of lectures shenendeavored to show them how they possessed in the immediate locality all the means of a healthy living. There in the village they had a wide space of countryside,slopes suitable for drainage,abundance of water,and the air itself of most wholesome quality. She explained to them how they were paying in rent money enough to provide every head of a family with a house of his own within a few years. At length they understood and approved the Biulding Society idea and were persuaded to form a society for their own advantages. Harriet held the meeting to commence the planning in her own kitchen.

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A very interesting phase,and one which reveals farsightedness on Harriet's part,extremely contrary to the general policy of many reformers,was the abstinence from any reference to tyranny on the part of the landlords,in her lecture. She simply showed that the interests of the people were capable of fulfillment in their own hands,and refrained from exciting any futile passion against the grievances she was trying to mitigate.

The last two lectures of the Sanitary Course gave her an opportunity for dealing with intemperance. She delivered a lecture on the stomach and one on the brain,with an illustration of the progressive disease of a drunkard's stomach.

Other lectures included one on the History of England, and one on the History of America. In December 1855,she had to abandon lecturing because she became so easily fatigued.

During the time that she had been earnestly active in her attempts to ameliorate conditions for the people of Ambleside,she had not at all neglected her writing. This period saw the completion of her Service handbook and her Guidebook to the Lakes. She also finished the History which Mr,Knight had handed over to her to complete.

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XV. Letters on the Nature and Development of Man.

Harriet Martineau felt now that she had reached the climax of the development of her philosophic reasoning. The greatness of her discovery was too glorious to be with-held from the world,and so she decided to publish a book which would designate the course of her philosophic growth that others might be aided and guided.

"Letters on the Nature and Development of Man" took an epistolary form. This work is designated as that of co-authors, yet strictly this was not the case. Without the name of Miss Martineau,this would not have been published. Yet the essential bulk of the material is Atkinson's. Harriet merely poses questions which he answers at great length. The importance lies in the fact that these answers contain the basic principles which dominated the philosophy of her remaining years.

The fundamental point of this book is its insistence that the Baconian method be adopted to study man and his mental condition,just as it is used to study a branch of science. The authors do not deny a First Cause,but declare that it is unknown and unknowable. But although it is beyond the comprehension of man,it is impossiblr to accept supernatural revelation to explain the phenomena.

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All facts around us can be observed and analyzed, and are found to occur in an invariable sequence of causes and effects which form natural laws. To this general truth the mind of man is no exception.

Because of the immutability of these laws, it must follow that the First Cause never intervenes to disturb natural law. Therefore, all speculation concerning the nature, character, and purposes of this original source of things, is put aside as out of the field of inquiry. We are not true philosophers until we realize these truths. The province of the philosopher is to trace all effects to their causes in nature, to their material causes and conditions, in order to obtain the discovery of the laws concerned.

Philosophy, rightly felt, as well as understood, is deeply reverential. It is the only religion which discards idol worship and selfish principles, and excludes pride because we are so humbly dependent on causes.

Scepticism is doubt, and no true philosopher has any doubt. What he does not know he holds in suspense, in a sort of interval between the first conception and the verification of a new truth. The positive philosopher(who is the only true philosopher) never walks in darkness, but always in the light.

Things are either knowable or unknowable. A First Cause is unknowable. What is unknowable about a First Cause is that our mental constitution compels us to suppose its presence; and that First Cause cannot be a God of theology.

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It is useless to try to convince theologians of this, since, believing that science and theology are incompatible, they "embrace theology as the fountain of wisdom, goodness, and happiness. They incline to what they call philosophy, that is, to theologico-metaphysics, from which they derive as they say, and truly, improvement in intellectual power, and confirmation of their religious faith in one direction, nearly equivalent to the damage inflicted on it in another. The result must be, when study is real and earnest, either the metaphysics must dwindle away to mere fanciful adornment of the theology, or the theology must in time be stripped of its dogmatic character, exhausted thereby of its vitality, and reduced to mere name and semblance."[2]

The men of science are hopelessly astray. They are too blind in their search for detail, yet fear to cast themselves away from theology. Harriet felt that scientists, theologians, philosophers, had none of them obtained the view of the grand conception and recognition that science is the sole and eternal basis of wisdom, and therefore of human morality, and of peace, Then she maintains that on her part she could truthfully say that Mr.Atkinson was the only person of the multitude whom she knew who had clearly apprehended the central

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The discovery that she alone understood Mr.Atkinson, who alone understood the fundamental bases of life itself, gave Harriet a sense of liberation, of freedom of restraint from he her own intellectual prison. She had learned that to form any true notion of any of the affairs of the universe, one must take a stand in the external world, regarding man as one of the products and subjects of the everlasting laws of the universe, and not as the favorite child of its Maker.

Men judge from an inverted image of external things within themselves when they insist on the Design argument. They apply the solution from out of their own peculiar faculties to external things, which in fact are what suggest that very conception of design to the human faculty.

It follows that the conception of a God with any human attributes whatever, or of a life administrated according to human wishes, must be mere visions, which, although necessary in their day, are not philosophically and permanently true.

Harriet expected this book to be as a thunderbolt into the midst of an ignorant and narrow world, and she well fortified her mind against expected blasphemy as well as social ostracism. But what she deemed a stone was a mere pebble thrown

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Any new and astounding philosophic discoveries which could have been made were marred by the great proportion of content devoted to technicalities of phrenology and mesmerism. Atkinson felt that he was more capable than had been his predecessors in making experiments in the so-called science of phrenology, because of his knowledge of mesmerism. He was interested in natural science, a study he was able to follow quite freely because of a small fortune left him by his father, but despite his leisure time he made no progress in the field.

The few critics who have deigned to read this philosophic but very dull and uninteresting work, have not been favorably impressed. There are passages which are verbose to such aapoint that one has rather definite doubts as to whether Atkinson himself was doing more than using words in a circumlocutory way, to effect a cloud of impressive thickness around a weak fortification of thought.

Yet, despite the frequent occurrence of combinations of words which easily give the appearance of meaning more than is actually behind the point, and a seeming vagueness of definite goal, the reader is conscious of the fact that both of these people were deeply sincere in the advancement of their theories. Ethically, their principles are sound. Their outbreak away from theology does not represent a very deep chasm,

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since the authors are more occupied in turning attention to the enveloping area than in directing observation toward the bottom of the chasm.

The one furore which the publication caused was that of the review offered by the Prospective Review, a Unitarian quarterly of which Harriet's brother James was one of the editors. The article was entitled "Mesmeric Atheism" and it directed a barrage of criticism against both collaborators; but since the bulk of the work was his, Mr. Atkinson received full volley.

The reviewer remembered nothing in literary history more melancholy than that Miss Martineau should have sacrificed her faith in orthodoxy to prostrate herself at such feet of clay. The general trend of the review was typical of the scathing criticisms often hurled at authors. There seems to be no doubt that James Martineau was the author of the review, which was unsigned. It seems like honest indignation on his part, to realize that his sister should forsake all influences for that of this unknown and ostensibly unintellectual young man who seemed to have nothing but the Baconian theories to which he could refer.

Harriet bitterly resented the attack, and never again communicated with her brother. She behaved very well over the whole affair, choosing to ignore all adverse criticism and firm in her faith in Mr. Atkinson. The attitude she took was typical of that on other occasions when the general concensus

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of opinion was against her. She was deeply convinced of the truth of her own discoveries and it deeply pained her to see that the proportion of their value did not equal the proportion of new faith; but she was broad-minded enough to concede others their opinions even though she felt pity that they could not comprehend the real truths. She also had the attitude that those who were worthy would eventually understand.

She offered no vindication of her point of view until her Autobiographt was written, and even then she referred to her brother James as "one of my nearest relations".

XVI. Translation and Condensation of Comte's Philosophy.

Atkinson's influence was so dominant in Harriet's life that when he expressed his interest in the Positive Philosophy of Auguste Comte, who was just beginning to be known by reputation in England, she immediately took a positive interest in it. It may be noted that Atkinson himself knew nothing of first hand information about Comte at all.

The System of Positive Philosophy had been published in six volumes a few years earlier, but as yet no equivalent had appreared in the English language. George Lewes had written a short account of the system for Charles Knight, which Harriet had read. It occurred to her, as it did for every new belief which she absorbed, that the public would be exceedingly pleased to have an exposition of it. She sent to London for the first volume of Comte's book, and was so fascin-

of opinion was against her. She was deeply convinced of the truth of her own discoveries and it deeply pained her to see that the proposition of their value did not equal the proportion of her faith; but she was broad-minded enough to concede others their opinions even though she felt pity that they could not comprehend the real truths. She also had the aptitude that those who were worthy would eventually understand.

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XVI. Translation and Condemnation of Comte's Philosophy.

Atkinson's influence was so dominant in Harriet's life that when he expressed his interest in the Positive Philosophy of Auguste Comte, who was just beginning to be known by reputation in England, she immediately took a positive interest in it. It may be noted that Atkinson himself knew nothing of first hand information about Comte at all.

The System of Positive Philosophy had been published in six volumes a few years earlier, but as yet no equivalent had appeared in the English language. George Lewes had written a short account of the system for Charles Knight, which Harriet had read. It occurred to her, as it did for every new belief which she absorbed, that the public would be exceedingly pleased to have an exposition of it. She sent to London for the first volume of Comte's book, and was so fascin-

ated by its contents and its close approximation to her own philosophy that she began to dream of translating it. She wrote of her intention to a friend, "one of the best informed men in the kingdom", who advised her that no results could co compensate her for the arduous task of translating six volumes of a style like Comte's, especially in letter form, as he had done, where it would be necessary to recapitulate frequently. He urged her to give an abstract of Comte's philosophy, with illustrations of her own devising, in one or at least no more than two volumes. Harriet was very receptive to thisadvice and heeded its rational value.

She earnestly felt that the era of which she was appart was one in which people were adrift for want of an anchorage of their convictions. There had been an organic period which had seen a faith which sufficed for all. But this period had passed away, and no one had presented to the people, nor were they able to obtain for themselves, any ground of conviction as firm and as clear as that which had been sufficient for their fathers. The period through which they were now passing was one of transition, and Harriet felt that whether transition were long or short, its moral dangers were great. She believed that Comte's work was the greatest single effort to obviate these dangers.

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its traditional sense, he referred to the first stage, in which man refers all phenomena to the omnipotence and immediate action of a supernatural being. In the metaphysical stage he refers all phenomena to some abstract form or essence. The positivistic stage teaches man that the cause of the phenomena is not to be discovered. Men must be content with the discovery of uniform actions.

The world has passed through the first stage, and is in the throes of the second. Comte felt that his immediate generation was in a turmoil, a result of the transition from the metaphysical to the positivistic stage. He firmly believed that the end of the metaphysical stage would coincide with that of the end of the nineteenth century.

The science of Human Nature is the science of Positivism, and it alone can extinguish the two earlier stages.

Miss Martineau says,

> "During the whole course of my task, it has appeared to me that Comte's work is the strongest embodied rebuke ever given to that form of theological intolerance which censures Positive Philosophie for pride of reason and lowness of morals.....The theological world cannot but hate a book which treats of theological belief as a transient state of the human mind. And again, the teachers and preachers of all sects and schools which keep to the ancient practise of contemplating and judging the universe from the point of view of their own minds, instead of having learned to take their stand out of themselves, investigating from the universe outward, and not from within outward, must necessarily think ill of a work which exposes the futility of their method, and the worthlessness of the result to which it leads."[1]

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The translation of this work insured the approval of Comte himself who recommended that her work be used instead of his own to disseminate his philosophy among the English

speaking peoples. It is far more advantageous than his own bulky work because in taking her friend's advice to do a condensation rather than a literal word-for-word translation, she has escaped the heavy prolixity, and redundancy of the original. Her efforts were not in vain in her attempt to explain the philosophy of Comte whom she rightly felt to be much misunderstood for lack of an adequate interpretation of his philosophy in its completeness. The work that she put forth is at present used as the text for Comte, in that its purpose was effective and complete and therefore can sufficiently explain to the modern student all the adequate bases of Comte's thought with no necessity of referring to the philosopher's difficult volumes. Her success in this work was due to that bent of her mind which seems to render her far more capable of paraphrasing and condensing, than of discovering.

With the completion of this work, Harriet engaged in a task which gave her a great deal of pleasure,-- the tour of the Lake District for the purpose of writing a Guide Book. This book is a friendly topographical volume replete with human interest. It is complete with pictures, a geological map, a description and record of the plants, and a directory of the residents, accompanied by clear guidance concerning routes, views, and hotels.

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With the advent of the news of her imminent death, which she took very calmly, Harriet called on her attorney and had all her affairs put in order. It was possible for her to have the necessary treatments for her illness at home, and therefore she planned to spend her last few weeks of life there, in the lovely, quiet home she had built for herself at Ambleside. She began the compilation of her Autobiography which she had started some time back, and in three months it was in the hands of the printers, ready to be printed at her death which took place no less than twenty years later. She also wrote her own death notice for the Daily News to which she had contributed more than three hundred articles during her lifetime.

She prepared herself spiritually for death, and devoted the last twenty pages of her Autobiography to a summary of her attitude toward death and the philosophy she had attained as it helped her to brave the oncoming attack. She felt that the knowledge of the truths which she had discovered in her contacts with various but vitally important sources of positivistic philosophy, was now of the greatest practical importance to her in this crisis.

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XVII. Later Journalistic Writings.

Her articles written as contributions to newspapers and reviews, at this time were very prolific. With the daily extension of her life went the extension of her writings. The two main sources for her contributions were Dickens' Household Words and the Westminster Review.

She broke off relations with Household Words because of the refusal on the part of Dickens to publish her tale for the Christmas number. This tale, called "The Missionary", he refused because of its favorablr view of Catholicism. Later the editor printed a story called "The Yellow Mask", which depicted a Father Rocco as a despicable villain. Harriet refused to do a request number after this had been published, and in a very condemnatory letter, she severed her connection with the magazine. She had already had occasion to disagree with Mr.Dickens in his views about women. She had been asked in 1849, to write some articles on the employment of women, especially in connection with the schools of design, and the branches of fine art manufacture. However she felt that this was rendered impossible because of the point of view of Dickens who ignored the fact that a large percent of the women of England earned their own living, and expressed the opinion that the function of woman is to dress well and look pretty. This startled Harriet but no less she says, than did his treatment of the Factory and Wage controversy in his "Hard Times".

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XVIII. Her Attitude Toward Death.

The attitude of a person toward death, whether his own or that of some one near him is always representative of his philosophy, whether that philosophy be one of which the possessor is definitely conscious or an imperceptible one which has never been positively expressed. Therefore, a knowledge of Harriet Martineau's philosophy of life cannot be adequately realized unless we know her philosophy of death.

The prospect of death, she says, left her no emotion, no fear. She attributed this to her general outlook on life. She felt that the case must be much otherwise with Christians, even independently of the selfish and perturbing emotion connected with the expectation of reward and punishment in the next world. Christians cannot be secure from the danger that their air-built castle will dissolve at the last moment, and they may perceive on what imperfect evidence and delusive grounds their expectation of immortality or resurrection reposes. This seems in itself like an impossibility and a self-contradictory statement, since it is very unlikely that the last moment in life is spent in philosophical interpretation. Nor does Harriet explain how she might excuse the foundations of her own beliefs should she at the last moment discover the presence of an after-world.

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She believes that it is not to the credit of the Christian to be going joyfully to glory while leaving his loved ones

behind. The unselfish and magnanimous person could not be solaced for this parting by personal reward. And in the next breath of philosophic thought, she asserts that the ones behind will not grieve too long anyway.

If there is anything important, it is that the universe should be full of life, as we suppose it to be under the laws of the universe; and if the universe is full of life, it cannot matter whether the human faculty of consciousness of identity be preserved and carried on when all the rest of the organization has gone to dust. Miss Martineau felt satisfied that there will always be as much conscious life in the universe as its laws provide for; and that, she felt, was enough even for her narrow conception, which could however discern that caring about it is only a mere human view and emotion.

Miss Martineau lived for twenty years after the writing of her Autobiography and death notice. These years were by no means idle. She contributed a great number of articles to the Daily News and earned for herself the reputation of one of the two leading women journalists in the country of that century. In general, her political sympathies seemed to coincide precisely with those of the various editors of this Liberal daily paper. She wrote on a variety of subjects; education, agriculture, foreign policy, economics, in fact anything she liked. Concerning her economic views she had gradually come to believe that what she had in her early days taken for the science of political economy, was actually now of no value,

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" Meddlesome Legislation" was directed against the operation of the Factory Acts, and in this she attacked Dickens and Homer.

Gradually she wrote less and less for publication, but her mind was none the less active, and to the end she kept up her reading and her correspondence with unflagging zest. In spite of pain and opium, her mind lost none of its vigor. She was always interested in life and always easily amusable. She liked talking to her friends, to the doctor; she liked to receive letters and she enjoyed reading.

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XIX. Evaluation of Her Own Powers.

Harriet Martineau had written over fifty autobiographical sketches for the Daily News, and very generously wrote one for her own death.

This death notice is full of vivid interest because of the candour of its judgment. Harriet was an ego-centric person, but not proportionately conceited. Their is a clear-sighted view of her own powers in certain fields.

With calm critical judgment, she stated the absolute lack of permanence in her novels and tales, because of the lack of artistic aim and qualifications.

"It was fortunate for her that her own condemnation anticipated that of the public."[1]

Concerning her own general powers, she offered an estimation which may be used by the most severe of critics.

"With small imaginative and suggestive powers, and therefore nothing approaching to genius, she could see clearly what she did see, and give a clear expression to what she had to say. In short, she could popularize, while she could neither discover nor invent."[2]

This is the most that can be said of Harriet's general works, if we except the Autobiography, and"Eastern Life".

Fame in a minute way has offered her place of one of the two leading women journalists in the century, but very few journalists sre really great. The essence of what they attempt necessarily excludes lasting reputation.

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XX. Critical Evaluation of Her Work.

Harriet Martineau was always abreast of her times, willing to turn to the use of current society, a pen which flowed freely and even fairly well. Her style was good and she could always be sure of being read by some clique.

The question is, of course, of what value has the work of Miss Martineau been in the field of social and religious philosophy?

In the field of social philosophy she had no original tenets. She popularized in a skilful and pleasing way, the principles and discoveries of the pseudo-science of political economy, of taxation, and the Poor Laws, in order to expound Ricardian views then in the height of their vogue, concerning wealth, capital, and distribution, or to attack the various abuses. She lived to abandon the orthodox economic fa faith for a more generous one, when she perceived that the general trend of thought was acknowledging that economic conditions are controlled and constantly modified by a multitude of various other conditions.

Her philosophic works show a passage from the tenets of Unitarianism to a purely agnostic position. She passed through the stages of Unitarianism to a fanatic Christianity. (The change indicated is implied in the word fanatic in that the change was of her attitude rather than of any fundamental concepts in the faith in which she had been initiated.)

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Her Christianity then became very free. She still deemed herself a Christian, but her mind could accept or reject only what she desired within the principles of Christianity. Agnosticism gradually stole in and increased, and she eventually accepted what she termed philosophic atheism, wherein her belief was that because it was impossible to know the First Cause, the real and justifiable and honorable subject of interest to human beings, living and dying, is the welfare of their fellows surrounding them or surviving them.

Whatever circumstances incited her to adopt new ideas as society adopted them, at any consideration, she sincerely and honestly believed that her discoveries were original. She carried into the assertion of any of her principles the same dogmatism and contempt for those who differed from her, that she had carried into the preceding ideas. Apparently, once she had reached a conclusion, she could conceive of no other possibilities.

As a Necessarian she believed that the very smallest amount of science is enough to enable any rational being to see that the constitution and action of the will are determined by influences out of man's control. With her rejection of Christianity, she spoke of the Christian mythology as a superstition which fails to make happy, fails to make good, fails to make wise, and has become an obstacle in the way of progress, as ancient mythology had become in its evolution. When she ceased to believe in immortality, all believ-

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Her brother James refuted some of the evidence given in her Autobiography, but he was unable to publish the letters which would prove his assertions.

In spite of her insistence that she alone record her achievements and evaluation for the future benefits of society, what she left for the coming generation was an extremely fair judgment. There was ever present in her life a feel- of inferiority occasioned by the circumstances of her childhood, which demanded recompense in the form of self- justification. She did not demand recognition for more than she had done. It may be that she, like those who thought well of her, had rather an exalted opinion of that which she did. But warmer and more biased judgments have been made for people by contemporaries than Harriet made for herself, with due con-

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sideration for the fact that her intention was to preserve a record of her own values. Perhaps she did criticize on her own accord in order to forestall the criticism of experts, but her opinion was none the less sincere. Her Autobiography is a very interesting work. Disregarding any evaluation of its authors worth, in itself as a record of the thought of the day it is valuable. Harriet was always cognisant of the important movements of the day and she always had an opinion on each of them. True, her views may seem of little value now, but at the time they had some intrinsic worth. As a woman of good intelligence, in touch with some of the best minds of her day, we cannot disregard her statements as of no consequence. She was a journalist who would not be likely to become a member of that coterie of authors designated as of the First Class; but she knew the transitory character of her fame.

The people with whom she came in contact were among the best known of the day. Whatever their opinions, it cannot be denied that she had some reputation in their eyes. Lord Brougham, for example, would not grant interviews or make requests from any and every one. He must have had some regard for her ability to ask her to write propaganda for his political policies. Lord Althorp too, had need of discretion in the choice of those to whom he gave his confidence.

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government of Canada met with such disapproval from his contemporaries that it eventuated in his retirement from public office, but whose worth and excellent judgment were later vindicated in the actions of his son-in-law who followed his policy with the greatest success for Canada.

The well-known Sidney Smith was a friend of Harriet's. Her Autobiography tells, not always advantageously, but with perhaps too harsh a judgment, of such people whom she either met or knew as William Taylor, Lord Jeffrey, Malthus, Charles Buller, Charles Darwin, Thomas and Jane Carlyle, the Brownings, Joanna Baillie, Grote, Bulwer, Hallam, Moore, Coleridge, Leigh Hunt, and numerous other lesser famous people. Surely one who moved in the circle of such celebrities must have had some qualifications.

It is true that she made certain that no one could leave to posterity any evidence from her own letters, but she was not able in this same peremptory manner to forbid the expression of opinion by those of her acquaintances who saw fit to mention her. The interesting and important thing to note is the fact that the attitudes and opinions we have of her are caught, not in a deliberate attempt to criticize her, but in what may be a more reliable source in its ingenuity, that is, in the casual, and therefore not purposeful, mention of ordinary correspondence. The judgments of those whom we may quote for their opinions must necessarily be considered with respect to their own powers of criticism.

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XXI. Casual Opinions of Contemporaries.

The correspondence of Harriet's contemporaries is a valuable source for current points of views about her. Several quotations may be made to attempt to demonstrate her position among those who would know or be affected by her.

Elizabeth Barrett Browning refers to Harriet and her references taken chronologically may allow us to discern her opinion.

December 4,1845. Elizabeth Browning writes to Browning that she has hung up certain pictures representing the spirit of the age. She has hung up Harriet's because "she is a woman and admirable, and had written me some kind letters." I

January 26,1846. " So I shall send the holder with Miss Martineau's books which you can read or not as you like..... They have beauty in passage but, trained up against the wall of a set design, want room for branching and blossoming, great as her skill is."[2]

August 22,1846. On hearing the news that Harriet is coming to London, she writes to Robert,

"I am underrpromise to see her, and I shrink from both herself and her consequences."[3]

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2. ibid, p. 431.
3. ibid ,p.453, v.2.

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In a letter to Carlyle, John Stuart Mill, the leading authority on political economy, says,

"Your criticism on Miss Martineau is I think, just; she reduces the laissez-faire system to absurdity as far as the principle goes, by merely carrying it out to all its consequences."[1]

Charlotte Brontë says of her after a visit to Ambleside, "She is both hard and warm-hearted, abrupt and affectionate, liberal and despotic, though not conscious of her own despotism."[2]

Carlyle in his correspondence with Emerson mentions her frequently and in his own way of characterizing, leaving a modern reader to wonder how much is beneath the word, while there is no doubt that Emerson fully understood his attitude.

June, 1837. "Her love also is great; nay, in fact it is too great: the host of illustrious obscure mortals whom she produces on you, of preachers, Pamphleteers, Anti-slavers, Able Editors, and other Atlases bearing the world on their shoulders, is absolutely more than enough."[3]

In the next year, he writes to Emerson,

"I read your paragraph to Miss Martineau; she received it as she was bound, with a good grace. But I doubt, I doubt

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O Ralph Waldo Emerson, thou hast not been sufficiently ecstatic about her,— thou graceless exception, confirmatory of a rule! In truth there are bores, of thr first and of all lower magnitudes. Patience and shuffle the cards."[1]

Mathew Arnold is far more harsh and brutal in his view. February 12,1853, he says in a letter to Arthur Clough,

"What does Emerson say to my poems—or is he gone crazy as Miss Martineau says. But this is probably one of her d----d lies."[2]

On April 25,1855, he speaks more calmly if a bit reluctantly when he writes to his mother,

"I am glad to have tha opportunity to speak of her with respect at this time, and for merits which she undoubtedly has."[3]

In 1877, the year after Harriet's death, he writes to the Rev.G.W.Boyle,

"I had forgotten the poem about C.Brontë and H.M. but I will look it up. I think there were things not bad in it, but I do not want to overpraise a personage so antipathetic to me as H.M. My first impression of her, in spite of her undeniable talent, energy, and merit— what an unpleasant life

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1.ibid, vol.1, p.181

2. The Letters of Mathew Arnold to Arthur Hugh Clough p.131

3. Letters of Mathew Arnold 1848-1888 p.50

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These are purely personal judgments, made not for the benefit of posterity, but for the information or curiosity of people who knew her personally. It would seem that her personal charm and attraction of character was negative. But we have also Charlotte Brontë's word that she was esteemed and respected in Ambleside where she carried out her beneficial work.

In a world where men reigned supreme, where important women were few, Harriet was evidently not favorably received by some whose fame has come down to us. Her women contemperaries were more lenient in their opinions, but both Elizabeth Barrett Browning and Charlotte Brontë give enough of a character sketch to allow us to see somewhat why she was not so popular with her masculine contemperaries.

But despite ready-made opinions which capable-minded people people have given us as references, it is necessary to make a judgment from the point of view of this day.

Harriet Martineau belonged to the school of utilitarian political thinkers who give light rather than thought, but who, by the intellectual force with which they insisted on the right direction of social reform, stirred impulses which made people desire reform. Essentially she was not a great thinker; nor was she a great leader. But had those who had the power to lead made a direct approach to her practical abilities, undoubtedly she would have been of great ser-

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Her feeling concerning society was scientific. She was not sentimental, but businesslike in her views of administering remedies for the betterment of social evils. A sensible and energetic interest in a rational order of things, rather than pity and a sense of pathos, moved her to take active interest in society.

Her religious philosophy would seem to have astounded Harriet far more than it did the world. The gradual development of universal values and breadth of thought that comes to all people of intelligence was to her a phenomenon which she believed peculiar to a chosen few, and she was constrain- to aid in the philosophic development of the world by publishing her discoveries for the benefit of society. There is no doubt that she possessed a mentality which allowed her mind to progress far ahead of those whose intelligence was limited, but there were others whose vision was farther ahead than Harriet's.

In her ego-centric view she believed that she and Mr. Atkinson alone possessed these astounding and phenomenonal views, which had been propounded in the past and which continue through these days which we consider so progressively civilized.

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XXII. Summary.

This study of Harriet Martineau has been made with the purpose of ascertaining her social and religious beliefs as they were influenced and molded by the environment in which she made her progress. The influences of her early home life, of minds of great intelligence with which she came in contact, and the circumstances of the social and religious thought of the time in which she lived, have all been considered in determining the extent and the limit to which she had any bearing on either phase of her society.

Her rank as a writer has been discovered to have been rather low for lack of real literaty talent on her part. Essentially she was a journalist. The topics of the day in the social side of life were the features of her writing. In these she revealed no originality. She made no discoveries; she said things no differently than others had said them. The doctrines of the laissez-faire economists were adopted as her own.

There are none of her works written for the propagation of the tenets of the advocates of the new science of political economy which was sweeping the country at the time which have anything of value now. They are merely illustrations of these doctrines whose essence she knew only from books.

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for the working man. She could have been a good social worker. What she believed may not have been the best thing for the betterment of society, but it seems evident that had she been free to follow her own bent, the more practical side would have come to the fore.

As a factor in the science of political economy and the regime of social work then, we may say that she was a negative one. Actually she had no social philosophy. She adopted that of those with whom she came in contact, and added nothing to it. Gradually, but even rather slightly, she underwent a change in this adopted view, and took on a more rational one.

In considering the question of her religious philosophy, more can be said. The evolution of her religious thought was more pronounced and more radical than that of her social thought. From the calm, clear and rational tenets of the Unitarianism if her parents, she went to a devoutly religious belief in the fundamental aspects of a fanaticism which held in ardent faith all the doctrines of Christianity. When still quite young, under the influence of the philosophy of Locke, Hartley, and the Scotch school of metaphysicists, she adopted Necessarianism. The doctrines of Necessarianism, she held until she came under the influence of Mr.Atkinson. Mr.Atkinson was the most pronounced factor in the various influences in her life. Why Harriet Martineau, with the faculty of mind that she possessed was so greatly influenced by the insignificant man, who seemed to possess no talents, no depth of thought,

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Here we may allow more credit for originality of thought. However she may have been influenced, she had her own ways of looking at phases, and her own way of expressing herself. She was very dogmatic about each discovery that she made. But because she possessed a good mind she was soetimes right, and those things on which she was right, she revealed a clear and rational view.

She was not a great thinker; but like many others who form a larger class than we suppose, she was ahead of her own day and time. For this at least, we can extend her credit.

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